

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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TELEGRAPH BRANCH
CONFIDENTIALControl: 7610
Rec'd: July 18, 1950
4:32 p.m.Info
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FROM: Brussels

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 80, July 18, 4 p.m.

Following tumultuous debate in Joint Assembly July 14 which had to be suspended when anti-Leopold Socialists began to sing LA MARSEILLAISE, there remained 16 speakers inscribed for session which begins today. Although President of Joint Assembly Van Cauwelaert told Embassy staff member that he hoped to bring issue to a vote today it seems doubtful if Assembly will rescind law of July 19, 1945 before end of this week:

In this connection, celebration of Belgians' national holiday July 21 has assumed special significance. Opponents of King argue it would be well, in view of fact that his return is inevitable, to rescind law of July 19, 1945 quickly in order that King might return for ceremonies next Friday, including Te Deum to which diplomatic corps is invited and review of troops.

According to press July 14 head of Socialist Party Buset in speech at La Louviere admitted that end of Regency was inevitable and that return of Leopold was certain. Calling upon Socialists to reaffirm their opposition to King, he said that Socialist Ministers of State would hand back their appointments in that time and that no Socialist Deputy or Senator would respond to convocation of Parliament by Leopold or would accept a ministerial portfolio from him. Nevertheless, "never" in a politician's vocabulary is a word of uncertain duration.

BAMMG

MURPHY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY J.L. SMITH DATE NOV 22 1982RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

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